

SYNOPSIS.

The story opens in a Confederate tent at a critical stage of the Civil War. Gen. Lee imparts to Capt. Wayne an important message to Longstreet. Accompanied by Sgt. Craig, an old army scout, Wayne starts on his mission. They get within the lines of the enemy and in the darkness Wayne is taken for a Federal officer and a young lady on horseback is given in his charge. She is a northern girl and attempts to escape. One of the horses succumbs and Craig goes through with the dispatches, while Wayne and My Lady of the North are left alone. They seek shelter in a hut and entering it in the dark a huge monster attacks Wayne. The girl shoots the brute just in time. The owner of the hut, Jed Bungay, and his wife appear and soon a party of horsemen approach. They are led by a man claiming to be Red Lowrie, but who proves to be Maj. Brennan, a Federal officer whom the Union girl recognizes. He orders the arrest of Wayne as a spy and he is brought before Sheridan, who threatens him with death unless he reveals the secret message. Wayne believes Edith Brennan to be the wife of Maj. Brennan. He is rescued by Jed Bungay, who starts to reach Gen. Lee, while Wayne in disguise penetrates to the ballroom, beneath which he had been imprisoned. He is introduced to a Miss Miner and barely escapes being unmasked. Edith Brennan, recognizing Wayne, says she will save him by securing a pass through the lines, they are confronted by Brennan who is knocked senseless. Then bidding Edith adieu, Wayne makes a dash for liberty. He encounters Bungay; they reach the Lee camp and are sent with reinforcements to join Early. In the battle of Shenandoah the regiment is overwhelmed, and Wayne, while in the hospital, is visited by Edith Brennan.

CHAPTER XXIV.—Continued.

Then a hand thrust aside the canvas, and a face peered in. I caught a faint glimmer of stars, but could distinguish little else.

"Boys," said the leader, kindly, "I wish I might give you better transportation, but this is the only form of vehicle we can find. I reckon you'll get pretty badly bumped over the road you are going, but I'm furnishing you all the chance to get away in my power. We shall guard you as long as necessary, and then leave you to the kindly ministrations of the driver."

He reached in, leaning down from his saddle to do so, drew the blanket somewhat closer about me, and was gone. I caught the words of a sharp, short order, and the heavy wagon lurched forward, its wheels bumping over the irregularities in the road, each jolt sending a fresh spasm of pain through my tortured body.

May the merciful God ever protect me from such a ride again! It seemed interminable, while each long mile we traveled brought with it new and greater agony of mind and body.

The hours that followed were all out endless. I knew we had reached the lower valley, for the road became more level, yet the slightest jolting now was sufficient to render me crazed with pain, and I had lost all power of restraint. My tortured nerves throbbed; the fever gripped me, and my mind began to wander. Visions of delirium came, and I dreamed dreams too terrible for record: demons danced on the drifting clouds before me, while whirling savages chanting in horrid discord stuck my frenzied body full of blazing brands. At times I was awake, calling in vain for water to quench a thirst which grew maddening, then I lapsed into a semi-consciousness that drove me wild with its delirious fancies. I knew vaguely that the Major had crept back through the darkness and passed his strong arm gently beneath my head. I heard him shushing in his deep voice to the driver for something to drink, but was unaware of any response. All became blurred, confused, bewildering. I thought it was my mother comforting me. The faint gray daylight stole in at last through the cracks of the wagon cover; I could dimly distinguish a dark face bending over me, framed by a heavy gray beard, and then, merciful unconsciousness came, and I rested as one dead.

CHAPTER XXV.

A Lost Regiment.

It was a bright, sunshiny day in early spring. Birds were sweetly singing in the trees lining the road I was traveling. I must have shown my late illness greatly, for the few I met, as I tramped slowly onward, mostly soldiers, gazed at me curiously, as if they mistook me for the ghost of some dead comrade; and I doubt not my pale face, yet bearing the deep imprint of pain, with the long, untrimmed hair framing it, and the blood-stained, ragged uniform, the same I wore that fierce day of battle, rendered me an object of wonder.

All through those long, weary winter weeks I had been hovering between life and death in an obscure hospital at Richmond. The moment the door was opened to permit of my passing forth into the world again, I sought eagerly to discover the present station of my old comrades in arms, yet could learn only that the cavalry brigade with which I had formerly served was in camp somewhere near Appomattox Court House. On foot and moneyless, I set off alone, my sole anxiety to be once more with friends; and now, at the beginning of the second day, I was already beyond Petersburg, and steadily pushing westward. As the road swerved slightly to the left, passing through a grove of handsome trees, I came suddenly opposite a large house of imposing aspect. A

MY LADY OF THE NORTH

The LOVE STORY OF A GRAY JACKET

by RANDALL PARRISH
Author of "WHEN WILDERNESS WAS KING"

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group of Confederate officers stood in converse beside the gate leading into the open driveway, and as I paused a moment, gazing at them and wondering whom I had better address—for I recognized none of the faces fronting me—one among the group turned suddenly, and took a hurried step in my direction, as though despatched upon an errand of importance. He was a tall, slender man, wearing a long gray moustache, and I no sooner viewed his face than I recognized him as having been one of those officers present in General Lee's tent the day I was sent out with dispatches. He glanced at me curiously, yet with no sign of recognition, but before he could pass I accosted him.

"Colonel Maitland," I said, "you doubtless remember me. I am seeking my old command; would you kindly inform me where it may be found?" He stopped instantly at sound of my voice, and stared at me in odd bewilderment; but my words had already reached the ears of the others, and before he had found an answer another voice spoke sternly "What is all this? Who are you, sir? What masquerade puts you into that parody of a captain's uniform?"

I turned and looked into the flushed, indignant face of General Lee. "It is no masquerade, sir," I answered, instantly removing my hat; "it is the rightful uniform of my rank, greatly as I regret its present condition."

"Where are you from?" "I was discharged from St. Mary's Hospital in Richmond day before yesterday, and am now seeking to rejoin my regiment."

"Surely," he said gravely, "I have seen your face before. To what regiment were you attached?" "The —th Virginia Cavalry."

The buzzing of voices about me instantly ceased, and General Lee took a step nearer. "The —th Virginia? You were a captain? Surely this is not Philip Wayne?"

So deeply surprised was his tone, so uncertain his recognition, I scarcely knew what to answer. Had I lost my very identity? Was this all a dream? "I am Captain Wayne, Troop D,—th Virginia." He grasped my hand warmly between both his own, and his kindly face lit up instantly with a rare smile. "Captain Wayne, I cannot tell you how greatly I rejoice at your safe return. We certainly owe you an apology for this poor reception, but you were reported as killed in action many months ago. I doubt not Colonel Maitland truly believed he looked upon a ghost when you first accosted him."

For the moment I was unable to speak, so deeply did his words affect me. "I fear, Captain Wayne," he continued gravely, yet retaining my hand within his own, "that I must bring you sad news."

"Sad news?" Instantly there came to me the thought of my widowed mother. "Not from home, I trust, sir?"

"No," with great tenderness, "your mother, I believe, remains well; yet the words I must speak are nevertheless sad ones, and must prove a severe shock to you. There is no —th Virginia."

"No —th Virginia?" I echoed, scarce able to comprehend his meaning, "no —th Virginia? I beg you to explain, sir; surely—and I looked about me upon the various uniforms of the service present—the war has not yet ceased—we have not surrendered?" "No, my boy," and the old hero reverently bared his gray head in the

that we could only scatter them in other commands. But you have not yet fully recovered your strength. You must not remain longer standing here. Major Holmes, will you kindly conduct Captain Wayne to my headquarters, and see that he is furnished with a uniform suitable to his rank. For the present he will serve as extra aide upon my personal staff."

I turned away, the Major leading me as if I had been a child. I walked as a man stunned by some sudden, unexpected blow. When I finally joined the mess upon the following day, clad now in fit uniform, I had regained no small measure of self-restraint, and with it came likewise renewal of the military spirit. My welcome proved extremely cordial, and the conversation of the others present soon placed in my possession whatever of incident had occurred since that disastrous day of battle in the valley. No attempt was made to conceal our weakness, nor to disguise the fact that we were making a last desperate stand. It was evident to all that nothing now remained but to fold our tattered battle-flags with honor.

Directly opposite me, at the long and rather scantily furnished mess-table, was seated a captain of infantry, quite foreign in appearance—a tall, slender man, wearing a light-colored moustache and goatee. His

I would have him to know how it all was. It was two months ago I got mit de flag of truce into de Federal lines at Minersville. You know dat time? I vos valtin' for answer ven a Yankee rides op, an' looks me all ofer like I vos a hog. 'Vel,' I say, plain like, 'vot you vant?' He say, 'I heard der voss Reb officer come in der lines, an' I rides down to see if he vos der hound vot I wanted to horsevip.' 'Vel,' I say, for it made me much mad, 'maybe you like to horsevip me?' 'No,' he says, laughing, 'it vos a damn pup in der —th Virginia cavalry, named Wayne, I am after.' I say, 'Vot has he done?' He says, 'He insult a voman, an' vould not fight mit me.'

He looked about him anxiously to see if we comprehended his words. "And what did you say?" from a dozen eager voices.

The Swede gazed at them in manifest astonishment.

"I say I knowed nothing about der voman, but if he say dat an officer of der —th Virginia cavalry vould not fight mit him he vos a damned liar. I vould have hit him, but I vos under der flag of truce."

I reached out my hand to him across the table.

"I thank you, Captain Carlson," I said, "for both your message and your answer. What did this man look like?"



"I Was Upon My Feet in an Instant."

name, as I gathered from the conversation, was Carlson, and I was considerably surprised at the fixedness with which his eyes were fastened upon me during the earlier part of the meal. Thinking we might have met somewhere before, I ransacked my memory in vain for any recollection which would serve to account for his evident interest in me. Finally, I ventured to ask, as pleasantly as possible:

"Captain Carlson, do I remind you of some one, since you regard me so intently?"

The man instantly flushed all over his fair face at this direct inquiry. "It was not dat" (he almost stammered in sudden confusion, speaking quite brokenly), "bot, sair, it har come to me dat you vos an insulter of vomen, an' had refuse to fight mit mens. I know not; it seems not so."

I was on my feet in an instant, scarcely crediting my own ears, yet on fire with indignation.

"I know not what you may mean," I said, white with anger. "But I hold you personally accountable for those words, and you shall discover that I will fight mit mens!"

He pushed his chair hastily back, his face fairly crimson, and began to stammer an explanation; but Maitland interfered.

"What does all this mean, Carlson?" he exclaimed, sternly. "Sit down, Wayne—there is some strange mistake here."

I resumed my chair, wondering if they had all gone crazy, yet resolved upon taking instant action if some satisfactory explanation were not at once forthcoming.

"Come, Carlson, what do you mean by addressing such language to Captain Wayne?"

"Vell," said the Swede, so agitated by the excitement about him he could scarcely find English in which to express himself intelligibly. "It vos dis vay, I vould not insult Captain Vane; oh, no, bot it vos told to me, an'

"Ho vos a pig yellow, mit a black moustache and gray eyes."

"Do you know him?" questioned Maitland.

"His name is Brennan," I answered slowly, "a major in the Federal service. We have already met twice in rough and tumble contests, but the next time it will be with steel."

"Gentlemen," said Maitland at last, gravely, "this is evidently a personal matter with which we have no direct concern. Captain Wayne's reputation is not one to be questioned, either as regards his chivalry toward women or his bravery in arms. I pledge you his early meeting with this major."

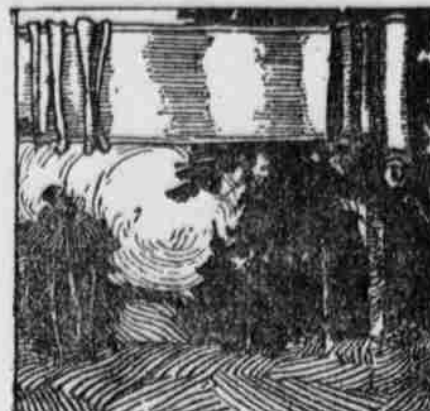
They drank the toast standing, and I read in each face before me a frank, soldierly confidence and comradeship which caused my heart to glow.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Scouting Detail.

This premeditated insult, which Brennan evidently dispatched broadcast in hope that through some unknown channel it might reach me, changed my entire relationship with the man. I have never felt that Brennan was at heart a bad man; he was hard, stern, revengeful, yet I have no doubt under different circumstances I might even have valued him highly as a comrade or a friend. There is no demon like jealousy; and his early distrust of me, fostered by that mad disease had apparently warped his entire nature. Yet not even for love could I consent to leave my honor undefended, and after those hateful words there could be no rest for me until our differences were settled by the stern arbitrament of the naked blade. All prudence to the winds, no opportunity of meeting him should now be cast aside.

The coming day was barely gray in the east when I was awakened by a heavy pounding upon the door. A smart-looking orderly stood without. "Captain Wayne?" he asked.



"That is my name. What have you, my man?" "Compliments of Colonel Maitland, chief of staff, sir," he said, handing me a folded paper.

"Dear Wayne," the private note read, "Believing you would be glad to have the detail I have just arranged to send you at once upon some active service. Please report at these quarters immediately, fully equipped for the field."

Glad! It was the very medicine I most needed, and within twenty minutes of my receipt of this communication I was with Maitland, thanking him warmly for his thoughtfulness.

"Not another word, Wayne," he insisted. "It is not much, a mere scouting detail over neutral territory, and will prove dull enough. I only hope it may help to divert your mind a trifle. Now listen—you are to proceed with twenty mounted men of the escort west as far as the foot-hills, and are expected to note carefully three things: First, the condition of forage for the sustenance of a wagon train; second, what forces of Federal troops, if any, are along the Honeywell; and third, the gathering of all information obtainable as to the reported consolidation of guerrillas for purposes of plunder between the lines. If time suffice, you might cross over into the valley of the Cowskin and learn the condition of forage there as well. A guide will accompany your party, and you are to avoid contact with the enemy as far as possible. Your men carry five days' rations. You understand fully?"

"I do, sir; I presume I am to start at once?"

"Your squad, under command of Sergeant Ebers, is already waiting out side."

"Are you all ready, sergeant?" I asked of the rather heavy-weight German who stood fronting me, his broad, red face as impassive as though carved from stone.

"Ve voss, captain."

"Where is the guide?"

"Dot is him, mit der mule, ain't it?" he answered, pointing with one huge hand down the road.

"Very well, we will pick him up then as we go."

I cared so little as to whether or not he accompanied us at all, that we had advanced some distance before the thought of him again occurred to me. I knew the gentry fairly well, and had experienced in the past so many evidences of their stupidity, if not actual disloyalty, as to prefer my own knowledge of the country to theirs. My thought, indeed, for several miles was not at all with the little party of troopers jogging steadily at my heels, nor, in truth, was it greatly concerned with the fate of the expedition. That was but service routine, and I rode forward carelessly enough, never dreaming that every hour of progress was bearing me toward the most important adventure of my life. It was the German sergeant who recalled me to the responsibilities of command.

"Captain," he exclaimed apologetically, riding up to my side and wiping his round, perspiring face with great energy, "ve are riding too hard, ain't ve? Mein Gott, but der horses will give out ontirely, already."

"Is that so?" I asked in surprise at his words. A single swift glance around convinced me he was correct, for the mounts were exceedingly soft, and already looked nearly played out from our sharp pace. "Very well, we will halt here."

With a sigh of relief he drew back, and as he did so my eyes fell for the first time upon the guide. As I lived, it was Jed Bungay, and when I stared at him in sudden amazement he broke into a broad grin.

"Durn if I didn't begin ter think as how ye'd gone an' clar fergot me, Cap."

"Not a bit of it, Jed," and I rode up to him and extended my hand. "But how came you here? Are you the guide?"

"Sure thing, cap; know this yere kinty like a buk. Jaded horsemen from the west, at evening to the castle pressed." By gum, you put Beelzebub an' me through a blamed hard jolt of it so fur."

"Beelzebub?"

"Ye bet, ther mule; I reckon as how ye ain't gone an' fergot him, hev ye?"

"Bungay, what has become of Maria?"

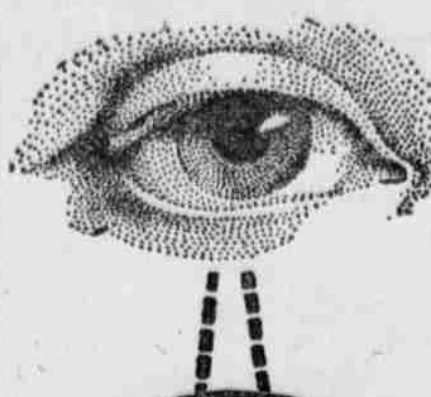
The little man's eyes suddenly filled with tears. "I jist don't know, cap," he answered mournfully. "Whin I got hum ther ol' cabin hed bin plum burnt down, nary stick o' it left, by gum! an' Maria she wuz clean gone. Hain't seen nother hild n'r hair o' her since, ther's a fac." An' I sorter drifted back ter you 'cause I didn't hev nothar else ter go."

"Did you hunt for her among the old plantations along the valley?" I asked, deeply touched by his evident feeling. "She very likely sought refuge in some of those houses."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

One of Life's Mysteries.

Why is it that the same remark which draws a laugh if made by one is a sure sign for a fight if made by another?



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